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CENTER FOR JUSTICE & DEMOCRACY RELEASES
TOP 30 “TORT REFORM” HYPOCRITES OF 2018!

Trump Leads List of Special Interests, Industries and Politicians Who Do Not Practice What They Preach When it Comes to Courtroom Access

The Center for Justice & Democracy at New York Law School (CJ&D) released a new report today, the *Top 30 “Tort Reform” Hypocrites of 2018!* The report ranks the hypocrisy of 30 individuals, lobby groups and corporations who regularly criticize lawsuits or work to limit access to the courts for everyday Americans, yet they repeatedly bring lawsuits of their own.

Said the report’s principal author Emily Gottlieb, CJ&D’s Deputy Director for Law & Policy, “For nearly two decades, we’ve written about the hypocrisy of those who push for limits on injured victims’ legal rights while they themselves turn to the civil courts for justice. It’s now 2018, and the number of ‘tort reform’ hypocrites has once again become too large to ignore. Our new list is by no means exhaustive. But it’s an excellent representation of individuals and corporations who say one thing but do another when it comes to the civil justice system.”

Leading the 2018 list is Donald J. Trump. The report notes that Trump “earns the position of civil justice hypocrite-in-chief simply because his hypocrisy is one for the record books. Trump has tried to block the courthouse doors to others in his business dealings and during his year and a half as President. But when he believes that he or his companies have been wronged in some way, he has always run straight to court. He has done so thousands of times.”

According to co-author Joanne Doroshow, CJ&D’s Executive Director, “Coming in at number two is the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, the largest ‘tort reform’ lobby group in the nation, which files almost as many lawsuits as Trump. Other lobby groups, like the NRA, frequently sue in court as they pressure state and federal lawmakers to enact limits on victims’ rights.” For example, the report describes how weeks after the Independent Community Bankers of America stood behind Trump as he wiped out class action rights for defrauded consumers, the association filed a class action against Equifax so its own members could be compensated.

Continued Doroshow, “Some car, drug, asbestos, insurance and tech companies made the list as well. Bayer, which is one of the most active advocates for lawsuit limits, doesn’t hesitate to run to court to protect its weed-killer. Georgia-Pacific – owned by Koch Industries and a strong supporter of restricting the rights of dying asbestos victims – has more than once sued to protect its paper towels and toilet paper. Every so often, Procter & Gamble, which lobbies for federal lawsuit limits, heads to court to safeguard its teeth whitener. BNSF, which supports state

liability limits for railroad workers and others, knowingly breaks the law and then sues over it. It's astounding.”

“Others making the list are companies that make unfettered use of the civil courts in order to protect their own financial interests yet block court access for everyday people through the use of forced arbitration clauses and class action waivers,” said Gottlieb. The report describes how Airbnb, for example, has used these clauses to block housing discrimination lawsuits against it while going to court to invalidate local housing laws it doesn't like.

The study also focuses on politicians like Texas Governor Greg Abbott, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, retiring U.S. Representative Darrell Issa and former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. Rex Tillerson and his former company ExxonMobil also make the list, as does Amway, which was founded by U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' billionaire father-in-law.

Said Doroshov, “The hypocrisy of ‘tort reform’ advocates runs deep and should give pause to any lawmaker who is being pressured to restrict the legal rights of everyday Americans. Everyone should have the right to go to court to obtain compensation, to right a wrong, to hold a wrongdoer accountable or to obtain justice. That includes every group, company and individual in our Top 30 list, all of whom obviously understand the importance of litigation. But the courts must be accessible by everyone, not just them.”

The full list of hypocrites is below. To download, click here:

<http://centerjd.org/system/files/Hypocrites2018F2.pdf>

1. President Donald Trump
2. U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform (ILR)
3. National Rifle Association (NRA)
4. National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)
5. General Motors (GM)
6. Chrysler
7. Uber
8. Airbnb
9. Amazon
10. Verizon
11. Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA)
12. Debt Collectors
13. State Farm
14. Liberty Mutual
15. Farmers Insurance
16. Honeywell International
17. Covington & Burling
18. Texas Governors
19. U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX)
20. Retiring U.S. Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA)
21. Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin
22. Ted Frank, Director, Center for Class Action Fairness
23. Koch Industries/Georgia-Pacific
24. ExxonMobil/Rex Tillerson
25. Amway/parent Alticor

26. Bayer Corporation
27. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF)
28. Pfizer
29. Teva Pharmaceutical
30. Procter & Gamble (P&G)

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